



# *The Referees' Association of England*

**Board Meeting Minutes Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2007**

**RA Head Office, Coventry. 10.30 a.m.**

## **Present**

Alan Poulain, (AP) Chairman

Arthur Smith (AWSS)

Richard Blackman (RB)

Nigel Genner (NG)

John Harden (JH)

Ray Mallery (RM)

Bart O'Toole (BOT)

Len Randall (LNR)

John Starkey (JS)

## **1. Apologies**

Ian Davies who was unwell

## **2. Obituaries**

Members stood for period of silent reflection on the lives of those members who had passed away since the previous Board meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2006: -

Norman Bradley	East Riding	Kevin Bright	Sunderland	Ron Cox	South Bedfordshire
Edward (Ted) Egan	Wirral	Chris Glaister	Slough & District	George Hartley	Wakefield
Lou Illingworth	Stockton	Martyn Short	Grantham		

## **3. Minutes of the RAE Board meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

**3.1** There was a discussion about debates on the RA/RAE constitution, RAE match officials' awards and Arthur Smith's new title 'Head of Operations' during the last meeting which was not minuted. There had been no action points or conclusions so it was felt that there was nothing to record.

**3.2** 134 remove 'and' after 'Thame'

**3.3** 137.5 Gordon Isaacs' Life membership

**3.4** 139.9 should be RB action point

Following the amendment of the above, the minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

## **4. Matters arising**

None

## **5. Internal Communications Committee (ICC) report**

**Ray Mallery**

**5.1** A list was circulated of the 14 LMSA nominations. The Board approved the recommendations made after detailed consideration by ICC. One life membership nomination was yet to be considered. 6 x 50 year awards plus 2 further nominations were added.

**5.2** A list was circulated of outstanding LMSA, Life and 50 year awards and not yet presented from 2005/6. In one case the presentation of Life membership had been proposed for a FAMOA day and a CRA event. It was agreed that these awards should be conferred on one occasion only

**5.3** Confirmation of the aim to confer awards as soon as possible after conference and it was all in hand and being chased as necessary. It was agreed that ICC have full authority to arrange the conferral of agreed awards without further reference to the Board.

**5.4** A list was circulated of 7 Societies due for their Centenary celebrations. AP said the recent presentation of an RAE engraved gavel had gone down well but it needed a box as well. It was agreed that Societies should be asked if they wanted a gavel and block or other such memento.

**5.5** The dates for the quiz qualifiers would be approved. Arrangements had not yet been finalised for the quizmaster for the final on 29 April. JH had inquired about nominees and would also write to Maureen Gawler to invite her to make the presentation of the national award.

**5.6** The Leicester branch which had been in difficulty has an offer by members to serve in the offices of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. F & GP will monitor this and assist if requested.

**5.7** The subject of communications between the RAE Board and the RA Board was raised with the suggestion not all knowledge is shared. Instances such as the change of title of the General Secretary and the RA £7,000 VAT liability were cited. The views of the RAE Board members not on the RA Board should be sought. RB said Board members had been invited to ask for information at a previous meeting having seen the RA Board minutes. AP agreed that RAE Board should receive copies of the RA Board agendas. It was noted the RAE Board members get the minutes of RA Board meetings. LR agreed we need to identify the key issues, adding that much RA Board business is detailed on commercial matters. We cannot have two RA Board meetings, one with the RAE Board and another with the RA Board.

**5.8** JH proposed that any RAE Board member should be able to stay overnight after RAE Board meetings on Saturdays to continue discussions and to avoid very long Saturdays out. It was not seconded. It was acknowledged that we need to expedite RAE Board meetings to avoid late finishes.

## **6. External Affairs Committee report**

**Nigel Genner**

**6.1** A member subject to an FA commission decision ordering him to attend a child protection training course complained that inappropriate comments about him to the local press attributed to his CFA Referees' Secretary. It was agreed that this would be raised at the meeting with the FA.

**6.2** AWSS was again proposed as the nominee to represent the Board at the FA Referees' Committee in 2007/8 his good work in the last year was acknowledged.

**The Board approved the nomination**

**6.3** Ian Blanchard had complained of derogatory comments about The FA published in a local Society magazine. It was agreed that the Board should only become involved in complaints where there is no agreement between the CFA and CRA. It was felt appropriate to offer guidance to local Societies. A letter will be drafted for this case with guidance that fair comment based upon clear facts and reasoned opinion is acceptable but derogatory, unreasoned comments about The FA (or other football bodies) are to be discouraged. This should serve as a timely reminder to all editors of ABS magazines to be careful of the type of articles they include in their publications and if unsure to seek guidance before any damage is done or they may leave themselves open to litigation. Action may be taken by the RAE Board against ABSs in the future.

**6.4** Eve of the Final Rally: The Honorary President had secured an offer by The Emirates Stadium to host the event at a modest cost, but this would become inappropriate for the Cup Final Officials should Arsenal get to the Final. The decision will be left until at latest the fifth round of The FA Cup on 18<sup>th</sup> February. Chelmsford Society had offered a very good suitable alternative venue in London and would help to organise the event, providing marshals etc.

**6.5** An agenda for the EAC meeting with the FA on 13<sup>th</sup> February is being prepared and the full proposed agenda would be circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting. It would include general concerns about CRB procedures, and the principle of the confidentiality of decisions by the FA and CFAs on CRB issues.

**6.6** Sepp Blatter - FA committee representative AWSS raised the concerns regarding the comments made by Sepp Blatter during the World Cup. The comments and observations of the Essex CRA Committee were noted and the general feeling was that the comments should not have been made and were inappropriate

**6.7** FA committee representative AWSS has spoken to the FA Disciplinary Department regarding the assault on a member whilst officiating in a small sided competition expressing our concerns that the player could not be identified. The FA has taken this up with the CFA concerned and the CRA has been kept fully up dated and will be informed of the FA's investigation.

**6.8** The Football Association has set up a working group to review the Laws and Rules of Small Sided Football and recommendations will be put to the FA referees committee for approval.

**6.9** Child protection continues to cause problems with members being suspended whilst the FA investigate allegation.

### **6.10 FA Matters**

A meeting is arranged with the Head of Referees at the Football Association on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2007,

### **6.11 RAE Eve of the Final Rally 2007**

Arrangements are ongoing to finalise venue.

### **6.12 Press Officers' Report**

**Arthur Smith**

Following my last report AWSS has answered Law queries from members and the general public.

Emails from members & fans questioning decisions made by our senior colleagues have been forwarded to the appropriate league or competition.

Interviews have been given to BBC Radio in support of Referee Amy Rayner following remarks made by the manager of Luton Town, Mike Newell, and regarding the coin throwing incident at Newport County which involved fourth official Alan Sheffield. I also spoke to Alan the day after the event to offer the support of the RA.

Just before Christmas Sky Sports news reporter Dan Rowan visited Head Office to do a follow up interview from 3 years ago on the recruitment, assaults and the behaviour of players, managers and coaches at all levels of the game. A number

of other referees were interviewed to find out if there had been any improvement in attitude from 3 years ago. The programme was screened over the Christmas period..

Arthur W. S. Smith RAE Press Officer

## **6.13 FA Referees' Committee Report**

reproduced from minutes by Arthur Smith

### **6.13.1 AGE DISCRIMINATION UPDATE**

The FA's legal department presented a paper giving implications of this new legislation and that the Act covers both upper ages and lower ages when determining whether discrimination has occurred. In essence the reason for any referees removal from any list should be based on performance evidence, through assessments, and not because of age. The paper will be discussed at the next meeting. It was agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would deal with any individual issues which arise before the next meeting.

### **6.13.2 REPORT FROM THE HEADS OF REFEREEING**

Mr I Blanchard confirmed he would be offering papers on promotion and assaults on referees and counselling facilities at the December meeting.

Mr I Blanchard offered update information on CRB and Child Protection suggesting that CRB checking should not be mandated until a referee has reached 16 years and that the Child Protection workshops are not suitable for those aged 14 and 15. After discussion the Committee agreed that CRB checks and attendance at a CP workshop would apply to those referees who were 16 or above.

Mr N Barry outlined the role of the 10 Regional Referee Coaches who were about to be appointed at Contributory League Level. It was agreed that succession planning is important to ensure high quality referees progress to the upper echelons of football. The Committee will receive regular progress reports so that the scheme's impact and effectiveness can be monitored.

### **6.13.3 FIFA NOMINATIONS**

It was agreed that as far as possible nominations for the various FIFA lists would be made at the July/August meeting of the Committee. Such a timetable would be facilitated by the PGMOL's proposed adoption of the FIFA fitness test as their pre-season test.

### **6.13.4 IFAB BUSINESS MEETING/PROPOSED LAW AMENDMENTS**

Mr N Barry circulated proposed law amendments for season 2007-08 which were cosmetic and minor in detail. IFAB is mindful there have been a number of changes recently and proposed a period of calm in respect of the Laws of the Game.

### **6.13.5 BASIC REFEREES COURSE FEES**

The Head of National Referee Development offered further explanation on the report previously circulated. The Chairman then opened up the debate to members.

Mr A Smith mentioned basic courses costing £85 in some areas. Mr P Jackson was aware of the differences between counties and that there had been some confusion between advertised and actual costs because of the increased costs of CRB and CP. He also felt that the costs were in line with a professional product and that we were getting the right sort of people coming into refereeing. Mr M Armstrong supported Mr P Jackson's comments suggesting that there had been very little change and reduced the numbers of time wasters who had no intention of taking up the whistle.

### **6.13.6 SUPPLY LEAGUES UPDATE**

Mr N Barry confirmed the £500 payment as a contribution towards assessment schemes in Supply Leagues. A number of high performing Level 4 referees would be offered development games in the near future. The target of having 50% of all games assessed is currently being achieved.

Mr R Wood reported that the pilot scheme operating in the Midlands is proving to be very successful.

### **6.13.6 REGULATIONS FOR THE REGISTRATION AND CONTROL OF REFEREES**

The FA Compliance Department has:

Issued suspensions for 10 referees in relation to all football and football related activity involving children under the age of 18 years.

Issued interim suspensions for 14 referees in relation to all football and football related activity involving children under the age of 18 years.

Lifted the suspensions of 8 referees

Arthur W.S. Smith RAE FA Referees Committee representative

## **6.14 Joint FA/RA Magazine**

The Joint Refereeing magazine with the FA was discussed and it was felt that although the magazine is excellent it is being seen as an FA magazine rather than joint one. More prominence is to be asked for when meeting the FA, although we are mindful of the FA monetary contribution. Bart O'Toole requested prominence in the next issue for the Eve of Final rally.

## **6.15 RAE Newsletter Notice of amendment**

The recently published newsletter emailed to members refers to CRP and CP matters. Please note that both items are still being discussed at the FA and that information contained in our newsletter is factually not correct at this time.

## **7. Finance and General Purpose Committee Report**

**Richard Blackman**

**7.1** The accounts up to 10<sup>th</sup> January show a net deficit for the year to date of £3,421.71 and indicate that, due to prudent housekeeping and the implementation of cost savings; the deficit for the year should be less than was budgeted for.

**7.2** The RA has repaid part of the outstanding loan; the balance is now £9,000

**7.3** A budget for the financial year 2007-2008 showing a small surplus of income over expenditure was approved; the accounting system will be reviewed.

**7.4** Head Office produces Membership figures every month which are distributed to Members of the RA Board, Members of National RA Boards/Council and to County RA Secretaries. It is recommended that County RA Secretaries should check the details against County RA membership records, contact those ABSs who show either a significant difference or nil membership and advise Head Office of any concerns that they may have.

**7.5** Monthly membership comparison figures show some alarming differences between CRAs & ABSs. The Chairman of F&GP will write to those CRA Secretaries who's CRA

- has less than 80% of the membership that they had at the end of March 2006
- has less than 25% of the Referees registered by their County FA
- contains an ABS with a recorded membership of 50% or less than they had at the end of March 2006
- contains an ABS with no recorded membership

**7.6** Membership is down by 5% against this period last year. Membership has been falling by about 5% every year since 2000-2001 and it is important for the well being of our Association that we seek to stop this decline in membership. It is suggested that we request the FA Regional Managers to more actively support the RAE and to encourage Referees to join the Association than they currently do. It was agreed that this will be added to the agenda for the forthcoming meeting with the FA.

**7.7** Jersey has still not registered any members. It has been intimated that they will pay a year in arrears, this contravenes RAE rules and they will be informed accordingly.

**7.8** Concern was expressed that only 11 out of 46 CRA Secretaries responded to the Chairman of F&GP's letter about membership. The responses are being collated and a report will be considered at the next meeting. It was noted with regret that concern was expressed by members at one of the liaison meetings about the phraseology of the letter sent by the Chairman to County RA Secretaries about membership. It was felt that there had been some misinterpretation of the letter which was seeking their assistance.

**7.9** Membership subscription are due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> April, we must continue to encourage members to pay their subscriptions to their ABS Treasurer to enable the funds to be received as early as possible after 1<sup>st</sup> April at Head Office. It is important that ABS Treasurers forward membership subscriptions to Head Office as soon as they are collected and not to wait for larger amounts because this can adversely affect membership benefits.

**7.10** It was noted with interest that a Society has issued a sales target for RA draw tickets as a membership enticement.

**7.11** It was agreed that a letter will be sent with the first Membership registration form to ABS Secretaries. A Remittance advice / Membership registration form and a direct membership registration form for 2007/2008 were approved for distribution.

**7.12** The Chairman has corresponded with the Secretary of North Middlesex Referees Society regarding their non affiliation to a County RA. It is understood that NMRS will contact Middlesex County RA to arrange a meeting during February and that they do not wish the Board to be represented at that meeting. It was agreed that the Chairman of F&GP would write to the Secretary of NMRS requesting that he inform the Board when the meeting is to be held, the outcome of that meeting and which CRA they intend to register with. Subscriptions are due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007, if NMRS does not affiliate with a County RA before that date the members will be sent a supply of Direct Membership forms.

**7.13** London County RA had requested an RAE presence at the London FAMOA development day to assist recruitment, the joint AFA & LONSAR society had been approached by London County FA and represented the RAE.

**7.14** It was agreed that the Association needs to develop better promotional displays for events such as FAMOA days where we sell supplies and seek to raise the profile of the RAE.

**7.15** Arrangements for the AGM to be held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2007 are in hand.

**7.16** Board proposals for rule amendments were discussed.

**7.17** Non-Board proposals were reviewed. It was agreed that the wording of some were similar to those that had been tabled in 2006 and should not be considered again this year in accordance with rule 15(d). It was noted that a proposal was not seconded on behalf of the proposing Society as required by Schedule 5 Part 1 paragraph 2 and will have to be rejected. It was agreed that wording of one proposed rule change was not entirely clear. The Chairman of F&GP will write to the proposing Societies accordingly.

**7.18** It was felt that the 2006 election process worked well although there were some improvements that can be made, the process will be corrected for the 2007 election. A modified Nomination paper for the 2007 election was approved. It was agreed that a copy should be sent to every ABS and placed on the website.

**7.19** A growing number of ABSs have successfully applied to the "Awards for All" fund for grants for training aids and it was agreed that the Board should maintain a register of those ABSs that have successfully applied and who are willing to assist other ABSs with an application. The Board requests those ABSs who have made a successful application to contact Head Office

**7.20** It was agreed that the Board should be represented at the funerals of the most senior members and past members of Council, the Board or Life Members where deemed appropriate and in exceptional circumstances the Board should be represented at other funerals, where agreed by the RAE Board Chairman, Treasurer and RA Head of Operations. No disrespect is meant by non attendance at funerals of other past members but with a membership of over 11,000, this would be a time consuming and expensive exercise. Discretion will be exercised in each case.

## **8. Conference Committee**

**Nigel Genner**

**8.1** The RA Conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel Warwick on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2007. The booking form has almost been completed and will be distributed to ABSs in early March and posted on the RA website

**8.2** The L&MSA awards will be presented at the Friday evening reception when a buffet dinner will be available. There will also be a stand up Bingo competition and entertainment from "Paul Arnold"

**8.3** A room will be available for the RAE AGM on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June. Roly Croysdale will be invited to head the scrutineers and will be assisted by members from Leamington RA, Ted Ring will be invited to take the minutes.

**8.4** The theme of Conference on the Saturday will be practical refereeing with Premiership Referees as keynote speakers. A Buffet lunch will be available as usual

**8.5** The Provisional Timetable is as follows

09.30	Registration
10.00	RA Chairman opens Conference
10.05	Keynote speaker
11.00	Workshops, then comfort break and refreshments
12.00	Workshops
1.00	Lunch
2.15	Law Changes
3.00	Workshops
4.00	Keynote speaker
4.45 – 5.00	Close

**8.6** The pre- bookable Workshops will be

1. Offside
2. Match Confrontation
3. Recognising Foul Challenges
4. Simulation
5. Refereeing on Local Parks
6. Player Management
7. Improve on Field Performance
8. RAE - Where are we now? A seminar for senior members to meet the RAE chairman

**8.7** The Speakers / Workshop leaders will be

1. Steve Bennett
2. Mike Riley
3. Mark Clattenberg
4. Howard Webb
5. Ian Blanchard
6. And others

**8.8** Ladies Trip will be to Evesham & Worcester. Leaving the hotel between 9.45-10.00 and returning at approximately 3.30

**8.9** Arrangements for the Saturday evening dinner dance are in hand and dancing will be provided by "The Likely Lads"

**8.10** It was agreed that AWSS will: -

- invite the Cup Final officials who are RAE members

- prepare a guest list for consideration by the Conference committee
- liaise with First Media

**8.11** RA Grand draw tickets will be on sale at Conference.

**8.12** Buckets for Benevolent Fund donations will be on display during the AGM and Conference.

**8.13** Coventry RS have been approached to operate a tombola. ABSs will be written to asking for tombola prize donations.

**8.14** The supplies stand will operate. The need to improve the presentation and labelling was acknowledged.

**8.15** There has been an increase in room charges at the hotel. The cost of a Single room has increased from £60 to £63 per night and the cost of a double room has increased from £74 to £77.70 per night.

**8.16** It is understood that Liverpool CFA proposes bringing a 50-seater coach of young referees at a very low cost. This initiative was applauded by the Board who would like to encourage other County FAs to arrange for their young Referees to attend.

**8.17** It is proposed that the **Centenary Conference** will be at **Wembley Stadium on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008** this is awaiting confirmation. This date will avoid the European Championships which are scheduled for June. A Centenary committee consisting of AP, NG, BOT, David Elleray and AWSS was agreed.

## **9. RA Board update**

**Richard Blackman**

**9.1** It was reported that the Personal Accident Insurance premium will be £4 per person for 2007/8.

**9.2** There appears to be much misunderstanding about the RA Group personal Accident Insurance policy, possibly because reference is merely made to "RA Insurance". The RA currently operates a Personal Accident Insurance Scheme, not an "All risks" or a "Life Insurance" policy. The RA Personal Accident Insurance policy cover can be extended to incorporate cover for any type of incident that members may wish, at additional premium(s). Cover can be extended for any accident 24 hours a day at an additional cost of £1 per member and it was felt that this would not have the general support of members. It was noted that this extension would not have assisted the family of Steve Allon who died whilst undertaking a fitness test.

**9.3** When we had our last VAT inspection, 12 years or so ago, HM Customs & Excise confirmed that Head Office was operating VAT accounting procedures correctly. VAT accounting rules and procedures implemented by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) have changed since then and our new Accountants were asked to check our procedures. Following a detailed investigation a voluntary declaration of underpayment has been made and £6,200 has been sent to HMRC in full and final settlement.

**9.4** There is a need to increase subscriptions this year, part of which will go to the RA and part to the RAE. Following the subscription increases approved at AGM 2006 for the year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 RA & RAE finances are generally satisfactory but there is a need to increase capital to fund future projects and to build up reserves that have been depleted over the past 8 years.

**9.5** There will be a significant cost of the RA centenary publication and it is known that further investment is required at Head Office. The services in the building are satisfactory, but there are concerns with the doors, staircase and flooring. The RA Board will need to decide whether to stay at head office and make it compliant with Health and Safety regulations, or to re-locate to more suitable premises. When the RA purchased the lease on the current premises, four members were listed as lessees, two have subsequently passed away and the lease has now been transferred into the names of Ken Anderton, Richard Blackman, John Bunn and Nigel Genner.

**9.6** Positive feedback has been received following the launch of the enhanced Website but there are still some areas needing attention. When it was launched every Society secretary was contacted either by email or by letter, or both, asking them to log on and insert their contact details. As of 30<sup>th</sup> January less than a third of ABS secretary details had been entered. The RA Website committee is undertaking to input the details of all ABS Secretaries, this will be a laborious and time consuming task, but will ensure that every Society is listed on the site and will allow visitors to locate their nearest society. The Society Secretary can then go on line and enter additional Society details. If nothing is done, their Society contact details will remain on the website with the e-mail address recorded. News items are being regularly updated.

**9.7** It was agreed that the new joint FA/RA magazine is a vast improvement on the old FAMOA booklet but it was disappointing to note that there were very few RA/RAE articles in the latest edition. It is understood that out of the 28 pages, about 12 were sourced or provided by Julian Carosi, but they did not necessarily appear as RA items. There was a meeting at The FA on 1<sup>st</sup> February to discuss the next issue.

**9.8** A number of obsolete shirts are available from our supplies department – about 40 with FA Referee badges on them. These can be liquidated, putting £2,000 - £3,000 into circulation. At a former RA Council meeting items were offered for removal to the counties. It was suggested that we should try to sell these at Conference and FAMOA days.

**9.9** It was agreed by majority to ask RAE Board members to support a proposal before the RA Board to increase the price of the raffle tickets from £50p each to £1 each in books of five tickets.

## **10. Nomination & election of officers for RAE Board 2007 & Committees & RA Board**

**10.1** Officers were elected

**Chairman** Alan Poulain **Vice-Chairman** John Harden **Treasurer** Richard Blackman

**10.2** Committee appointments were made

<b>Finance and General Purposes Committee</b>	RB (Chairman), JH, AP, JS, plus BOT (non-voting)
<b>External Affairs Committee</b>	NG (Chairman), BOT, AP, LR
<b>Internal Communications Committee</b>	RM (Chairman), ID, JH, JS
<b>Conference Committee</b>	NG (Chairman), ID, BOT AWSS

**10.3** The following members were appointed to serve on the Board of the Referees' Association AP, RB, NG, JH & RM

**10.4** Len Randall informed the Board that he will not be seeking re-election this year.

## **11. Any other business**

**11.2** The next Board meeting will be on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May

**11.3** The RA Board and RA AGM are on 28<sup>th</sup> April and the quiz final is on 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**11.4** It was agreed that the November RAE Board meeting on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November will be held at The Stonebridge Manor Hotel.

Meeting closed at 4.PM and all Chairs of committees and Board members were thanked for the professional manner that this meeting had been conducted

Signed: (Chairman)

Date: